

TL4T Newsletter

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The Truth about Wikipedia

To **Wikipedia** or not to Wikipedia? That is the question of many teachers. Is Wikipedia a reliable source for students to use? What is the truth? What are the facts & what are the myths?

Wikipedia is a wiki. In other words, a wiki is a simple webpage that is collaborative. Meaning multiple authors can create, write, & edit a page. The thing to keep in mind is that one person creates a page & becomes the gatekeeper. Pages can be set up to either notify the author of new changes or to be approved by the author. Not all wikis are set up that way. It depends on the author & whether or not they have it set as a private wiki. So Wikipedia is an online encyclopedia that is a wiki.

Criticisms of Wikipedia;

- Poor prose, or ease-of-reading issues
- Omissions or inaccuracies, often small but

including key omissions in some articles

- Poor balance, with less important areas being given more attention & vice versa

The most common praises of Wikipedia;

- Factually sound & correct, no glaring inaccuracies
- Much useful information, including well selected links, making it possible to "access much information quickly"

So what does all this mean? Should students be allowed to use it? Remember that Wikipedia is an encyclopedia, & most college professors do not accept Wikipedia as a reference. Wikipedia is a great place for students to start to get more information about a topic, but they should be encouraged to use the references listed at the bottom of the articles to find more reliable resources.

A tool that can help is the *Firefox* add-on **WikiTrust** (www.wikitrust.net), which will color code an Wikipedia article according to the degree with which it has been revised by reputed authors.

Some other sites that we have covered to use as an alternative to Wikipedia are – **The Full Wiki**, **Qwiki**, & **WikiMindMap**.

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W2CO

WikiTrust

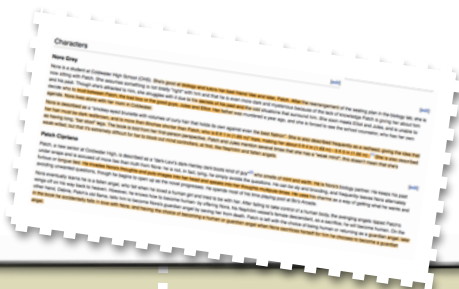
www.wikitrust.net

A great *Firefox* add-on is **WikiTrust**. This extension helps you find reliable information in a *Wikipedia* article.

Once you have it installed, when you visit a *Wikipedia* page, you will see a WikiTrust tab. If you click on it, you will see the text in the article color coded according to the degree with which it has been revised by reputed authors.

High reputation text that has been revised by high-reputation authors will appear white. Low reputation text, which has not been revised by multiple, high-reputation authors, is displayed with an orange highlight. The more intense the orange, the lower the reputation of the text.

If you **Command + Option/Alt + click** on a Mac (**Control + Alt + click** on a PC), you will be redirected to a *Wikipedia* page where the edited section was introduced. This will enable you to trace the text back to its authors.



QR Codes & Tools



One thing that you may have noticed recently is the influx of strange black & white squared shape codes all over the place. Businesses, billboards, magazines, & products you buy in the grocery stores. Ever wonder what they were? They are called QR codes, also known as Quick Response Codes. Basically, they are bar codes that can be scanned & take you quickly to a website, text information, & phone number.

To be able to read a code, you can easily download one from the App Store (ex; **Qrafter**) or the Droid Market (ex; **QR Droid**) to your smartphone or mobile device. They are a great new tool to use in the classroom by taking away the fuss of typing a long address into a device's mobile browser, by just simply scanning a code & then opening the website or file.

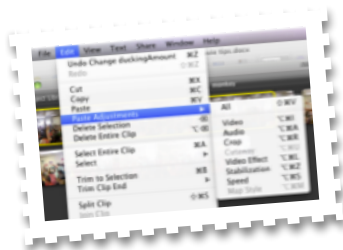
There are a lot of webpages out there for creating QR codes. Three options are **Kaywa QR-Code** (qrcode.kaywa.com), **Qurify!** (www.qurify.com), & **GOQR.ME** (goqr.me). All of them you simply enter the information you want to be read. This can be a web address, text, phone number, text message, or business card information. Then the websites will create a downloadable QR code for you to use. Try now on the two QR codes in the newsletter.

So what does this mean for educators? Try the **QR Game Generator** (www.classools.net/QR/) from *ClassTools.net*. This treasure hunt gets students using their mobile devices or the building's iPods to move & to learn. Just submit, create, display, & begin. You can create your own quiz by entering your questions, print off the QR codes for each question, & have the students begin their treasure hunt around the building.

Other classroom ideas,

- Students create paragraphs over the planets. Create QR codes & place them next to the pictures of the planets.
- Display student artwork, & create a gallery for parents & staff to scan a code to learn more about the artist & artwork.

Tips or Tricks

[illegible]

Changes can be done to multiple clips with **shortcut**. First alter one clip, copy it when you're done. Then select all the clips within the project you'd like to change.



What can be done with the extra video footage? Importing it into **iMovie** is an option, but it gets converted to a format that takes up a lot of space. One option to avoid this is to save your media in its original format.



- Connect your camera & go to iMovie's Import window.
- Bottom left of the interface is an Archive All button.
- Select it & iMovie will save the entire content of your camera into a special file.

In the future, when you're ready to import your clips into an iMovie event: go to **File > Import > Camera Archive** & select that file.

Teacher Feature

Mr. Howard &

Mrs. Ingwerson

This year the high school has three *Flip* handheld video cameras, & during the first semester they have gotten regular use. As part of **Mr. Thomas Howard's** (High School Science) Intro to Engineering class, students used the cameras to gather data on the optimal location for an on-campus wind turbine. Mini-turbines were placed at approx. 10 locations around campus, & cameras gathered data on the number of rotations on varying weather days. Students are still collecting data before making a recommendation for a permanent turbine.

In **Mrs. Diana Ingwerson's** (High School Business) Digital Media & Web Design, students completed a digital video scavenger hunt, & shot commercials to gain experience using video editing software.

ActivInspire: Finding Resources



There are plenty of ways to find resources & pre-made flipchart pages for you to use. ActivInspire comes with built in activities & templates, some of them can even be used with Activotes or ActivExpressions. You can find them in your **Resource Browser** or **Insert > Page**.

Another place to go is *Promethean Planet* (www.prometheanplanet.com). There you can download teacher made flipcharts & resource packs to add to your resources. To import an resource pack, just go to **File > Import > Resource Pack to My Resources...**

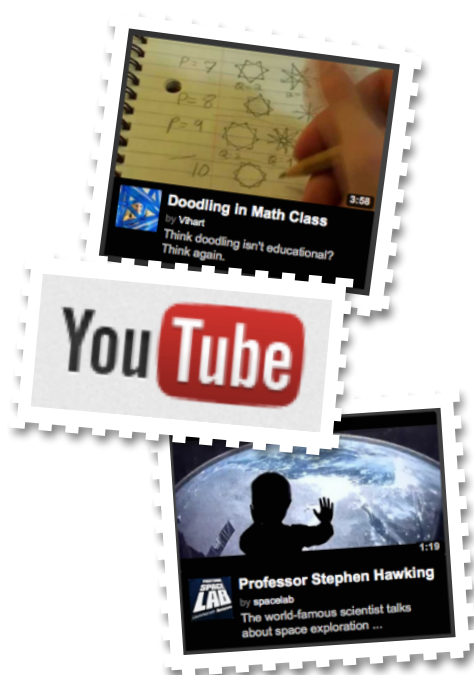
Did you know you can download flipcharts or notebooks from SMART, another interactive whiteboard company? Just go to *SMART Exchange* (<http://exchange.smarttech.com>) to search through their notebooks. To open it in Inspire go to **File > Import > SMART Notebook File**. Just be aware that any actions set in SMART will not work & will have to be re-added in Inspire.

Do you want to reuse some of those old PDF worksheets? Just go to **File > Import > PDF**, then find & select the PDF to import. You can choose the page size, which pages to import, & where to import the PDF. The PDF will now become an image on the flipchart page to interact with & write on

YouTube EDU

youtube.com/education

YouTube has recently launched **YouTube EDU**. This platform gives students access to approved educational videos, those through Google's Education Partners (e.g. Kahn Academy, TED, PBS & Stanford), & those that have been teacher approved. Schools can set up networks with playlists of approved videos. Comments & related video links have been disabled & searching is limited to YouTube EDU. The videos are categorized by grade level & subject (i.e. primary - university). **YouTube Teachers** (www.youtube.com/teachers) has grade & subject-specific playlists aligned with educational standards (compiled by teachers).



iPod Apps: Graphs, Planets, Fotopedia



Elementary – **GRAPHS** – Students can take a tutorial on constructing & interpreting graphs, & a workbook to understand types of graphs including Line Graphs, Bar Graphs, & Pie Charts. They can then test their understanding by answering questions with graded difficulty levels.



Middle School – **PLANETS** – 8th grade Earth Science classes recently were asked to rank the Space apps that we have available & their top choice was *Planets*. They liked this app for the way it pictured the planets, how they could explore the sky in 2D & 3D, & the app showed everything in real time. This is a free app that has the 8th grade seal of approval!



High School – **Fotopedia Wild Friends** – The folks who brought you *Fotopedia Heritage* now have a beautiful app providing gorgeous pictures of wildlife alongside key facts – a nature encyclopedia at your fingertips. Perfect for animal research projects/presentations. Fotonauts has several great Pro apps on national parks, France, & human colors.

Reading Bear: www.readingbear.org

From the people that were an Elementary feature last month *WatchKnowLearn*, comes a new site designed to help kids learn to read. **Reading Bear** is a free service that teaches children to read by introducing phonics principles painlessly & systematically, while teaching new vocabulary. Students can control the pace of each lesson to match their needs.

After each lesson on Reading Bear, students can take quizzes to practice what they have learned. The quizzes present a picture & a set of words. Students have to match the correct word to the picture that they see. Students receive instant feedback from the narrator on each question in the quiz.

Reading Bear would be a good independent activity or an activity that children work through with the assistance of a parent or teacher.



The woman is
taking a **nap**
in the grass.